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C O N F I D E N T I A L PARAMARIBO 000725

SIPDIS

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SUBJECT: Possible Venezuelan Meddling

CLASSIFIED BY AMBASSADOR MARSHA E. BARNES, REASONS 1.4 (B) & (D)

[1](#)1. (C) A member of Desi Bouterse's National Democratic Party (NDP) claims Bouterse is receiving funding and tacit political support from Venezuela. End summary

[1](#)2. (C) A member of the Mission has been told by a self described member of the NDP that former military dictator Desi Bouterse has made a number of recent trips to Venezuela; that he is receiving financial support from Venezuela; and that President Chavez has promised him recognition and support should Bouterse succeed in his stated goal of bringing down the government of President Venetiaan.

[1](#)3. (C) The Mission member says that in his contacts, spanning more than two years, the Surinamese individual has been consistently honest and factual and delivered on his word. In response to a question the Surinamer indicated that he wanted his information to reach the appropriate U.S. authorities. He is described as a Surinamese nationalist concerned about outside influence, although he finds some of President Chavez's anti-capitalist rhetoric appealing. He has never previously offered comment on internal NDP matters, although he constantly offers a well left of center take on world events.

[1](#)4. (C) Bouterse is the subject of an Interpol arrest warrant. However post has little reason to doubt that he could easily depart via charter from Suriname's international airport. A close associate of his handles all general aviation.

[1](#)5. (C) Post has no other information to support or refute information presented. Some observers of the local political scene have suggested that Bouterse's recent much publicized walks through the central market and very poor neighborhoods are taken from Chavez' playbook. While these walks have generated some favorable comments from the disgruntled, they have failed to produce scenes of Bouterse trailed by enthusiastic followers.

BARNES

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